REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9-36, and 38-59 are pending, of which claims 1, 30, and 59 are independent. Claims 1, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20-28, 30, 31, 39-57, and 59 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the action mailed April 22, 2004, is requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 9-11, 16-20, 22-31, 38-40, 45-49, 51-58, and 59 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,201,550 B1 ("Sakamoto"). The Examiner rejected claims 21 and 50 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sakamoto in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,096,217 ("Roll"). The Examiner objected to claims 3-7, 12-15, 32-36, and 41-44 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's recognition of allowable subject matter in claims 3-7, 12-15, 32-36, and 41-44.

Section 102(a) Rejections

Claim 1 stands rejected as anticipated by Sakamoto. Claim 1, as amended, requires user input defining aspects of a gradient. A user input is required to define a gradient starting point, gradient ending point, and at least one intermediary point, as well as defining a first and second set of values of a set of gradient attributes. Sakamoto only renders a received image and does not disclose or suggest receiving user input to define a gradient.

In Sakamoto, a method for printing an existing image including a gradient is disclosed. An image forming apparatus receives a print job from a computer. *See* col. 5, lines 20-29. A print engine receives image data generated by the image forming apparatus and renders the image. *See* col. 5, lines 36-40. The image forming apparatus includes a command analysis unit that receives the print job described in the form of a page description language, interprets the data, and transfers drawing data to a drawing data storage unit. *See* col. 5, lines 44-57.

Sakamoto does not receive user input defining a gradient starting point, a gradient ending point, or at least one intermediary point. Sakamoto only receives data describing a complete image, that includes a gradient, from a computer. The data is interpreted in order to print an

image associated with the data. There is no user involvement in the process of rendering a gradient for the received image as required by claim 1. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1, as well as claims 2-29, which depend from claim 1, are in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 also requires two distinct sets of attribute values, each defining a smooth transition between points on a gradient. The first set of attribute values defines a smooth transition between a gradient starting point and at least one intermediary point. The second set of attribute values defines a smooth transition between at least one intermediary point and a gradient ending point. Therefore, the definition of the smooth transition between the gradient starting point and the at least one intermediary point is different from the definition of the smooth transition between the at least one intermediary point and the gradient ending point.

Sakamoto does not disclose sets of attributes where each set defines a smooth transition between points on a gradient. The Examiner contends that the concentric circles of constant color shown in FIG. 21 of Sakamoto disclose distinct sets of attribute values defining a transition between two points. In FIG. 21, each band has an equal width and constant color such that the only change from one ring to another is a step change in color. Thus, Sakamoto's gradient is defined by step changes in color over constant intervals. The Examiner identifies the point where color step changes as an intermediary point. However, the step change in color at Sakamoto's intermediary point does not represent a change in a set of attribute values that defines a smooth transition between a starting point and an intermediary point or between an intermediary point and an ending point. For at least this additional reason, claim 1, as well as claim 2-29, which depend from claim 1, are in condition for allowance.

Claims 30 and 59 stand rejected as anticipated by Sakamoto. For at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1 claims 30 and 59, as well as claims 31-36 and 38-58, which depend from claim 30, are in condition for allowance.
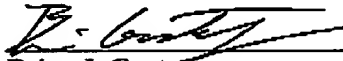
Applicant : Pankaj Mathur, et al.   Attorney's Docket No.: 07844-486001 / P450
Serial No. : 09/935,006
Filed   : August 21, 2001
Page   : 14 of 14

Applicant respectfully requests that all pending claims be allowed. Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: _22 July, 2004_

Brian J. Gustafson
Reg. No. 52,978

Fish & Richardson P.C.
500 Arguello Street, Suite 500
Redwood City, California 94063
Telephone: (650) 839-5070
Facsimile: (650) 839-5071

50220430.doc